

# COGNITIVE CURATIONS OF COLLABORATIVE CURRICULA

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## ABSTRACT

Assuming the role of learning curators, 22 graduate students (in-service teachers) addressed authentic problems (challenges) within their respective classrooms by selecting digital tools as part of implementation of interdisciplinary lesson plans. Students focused on formative assessment tools as a means to gather evidence to make improvements in the learning process. Floor plans of rooms in houses were used as metaphors by each group to contain the various digital tools that they selected. This paper includes descriptions of the final curations with samples of the digital assessments tools, as well as lessons learned for future applications.

## KEYWORDS

Curation, assessment, digital, web2.0, online learning

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Content curation may be defined as the act of finding, grouping, organizing or sharing the best and most relevant content on a specific issue (Bhargava, 2011). Although we probably perform curation without deliberate thought, curation has only recently been applied to the learning (Gadot & Levin, 2012) and performance field (Fulton, Botticelli, & Bradley, 2011). Bhargava identifies five models for using content curation: 1. aggregation, 2. distillation, 3. elevation, 4. mashups, and 5. chronology. This paper focuses on graduate course assignments that extend beyond aggregating and filtering into value-added selections of digital tools to facilitate and assess learning (Rosenbaum, 2011; Mihailidis & Cohen, 2013; Callens, 2014; Green & Green, 2014; Literat, 2014; Greener & Wakefield, 2015; Ibrahim, Atif, Shuaib, & Sampson, 2015) with formative feedback to help people grow (Weisgerber, 2012; Niess & Gillow-Wiles, 2013). Topics in this paper include the background and definition of learning curation; a description of the audience and environment where the course was conducted; the course Assignment including the floor plan and rooms metaphor; web2.0 open sources, identification of digital tools that were selected for the container and instructional tools; screenshots of sample products; and results/lessons learned for future replication of the Assignment.

### 1.1 Definition of Terms

Curate – pull together, select organize, and look after items in a collection; select, organize, and present using expert knowledge; act as curator, organize and oversee; take charge of or organize

Formative evaluation- range of formal and informal assessment procedures employed by instructors during the learning process to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment

### 1.2 Audience and Environment

The paper focus involves 22 graduate students in a Master of Arts Instructional Technology program in the United States, with a course titled, Educational Hardware & Software. Participating students included K-12 teachers (age 22-72) with three representatives from higher education, business, and the military. Class members were grouped into teams of 2-3 people who shared the same discipline. For student convenience,

class attendance options included face-to-face, online synchronous, online asynchronous (using *Blackboard and Collaborate*). The next section includes the Assignment given to the graduate students during a 10-week semester.

## 2. ASSIGNMENT FOR CURATOR CREATION

The term curator comes from the Latin term meaning *take care*. This term is widely used relating to a person who works in a gallery, museum, historical site, zoo, etc. and serves as the content specialist. The role of a curator in a museum is to arrange objects in a particular way that demonstrates a specific theme or tells a story.

Recently, curators have become a popular term in the educational field as they play the same or similar role to a person in a museum. Since educators have access to exponential information it is hard for the learner to select what is important and what is not. As a result, the curator plays a vital part in the ecosystem of a learner by gathering and selecting the best examples to learn a particular concept and create the framework for the learner.

The purpose of the educator is to assemble specific tasks to complete in a real, rigor, and relevant manner that is easy to navigate and engage all. In addition, infusing technology through this process enables educators to permeate global interaction through the use of social media.

Throughout this course, you will serve as the Educational and Technology Curator. Your role is to work in a team (2 or more) who share the same discipline (science, math, language arts, social studies, etc.) or area of expertise. Each discipline will have its own floor (For example, floor one might be math, floor two is science, floor three is business, floor four is language arts, etc.) with customized rooms (Gaming Gallery, Fun Room, etc.) to meet the needs of the learner and the framework designed by the curator (Please see examples of possible rooms, yet feel free to create your own titles).

### 2.1 Within each Floor, include a Minimum of the Following

- Complete a lesson plan template integrating 9 events of instruction (See Gagne' for further details)
  - Create a specific assessment using Bloom's Taxonomy (authentic, MC/T/F, etc.) using a free web 2.0 tool of your choice
  - Create an activity integrating social media that will increase collaboration
  - Create something (aka global wild card) on your floor that is original and not previously discussed
- (Each floor will be different)
  - Create a container or *hub* to house your information (iBook author, wiki, wix, weebly, livebinder, google site, eportfolio, edmodo, schoology etc.) for sharing with all of your classmates during our Synergistic Showtime. See Figures 1 and 2 for examples of room types to think about for your own floor plan.

This slideshow may provide some background to get you started on what this is all about.

<http://www.slideshare.net/corinnnew/reenvisioning-modern-pedagogy-educators-as-curators-11879841>

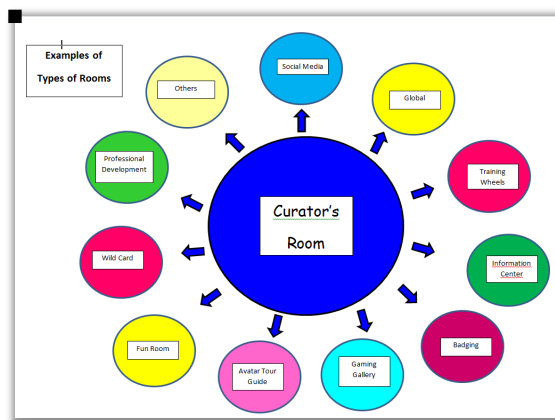


Figure 1. Room types



Figure 2. What's in each room?

## 2.2 Examples Screen Shots of Curated Containers (Hubs)

In this section, selected products are shown as screenshots within the container that the student used as a floor plan to house the various rooms to address his/her instructional problem (challenge). Figure 3 is a Time Management sample; Figure 4 is a Project Management sample; and Figure 5 is an Algebra sample.

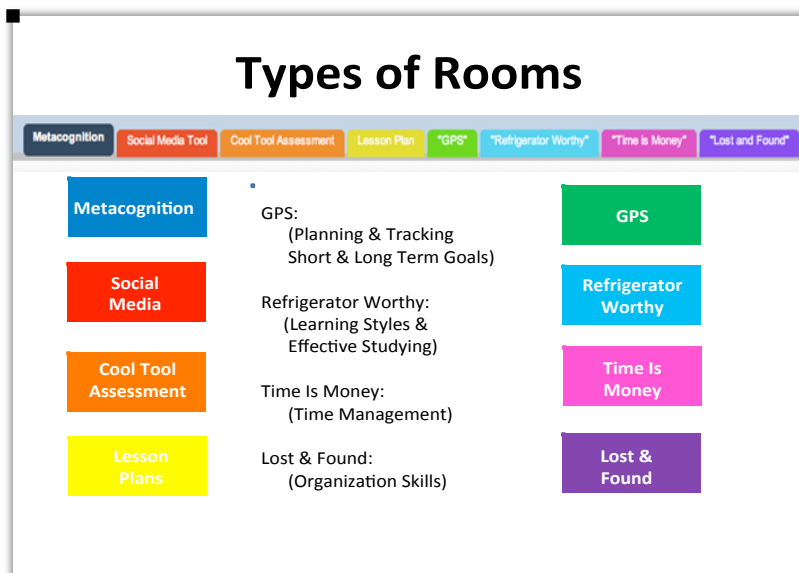


Figure 3. Time management sample rooms



Figure 4. Project management sample rooms

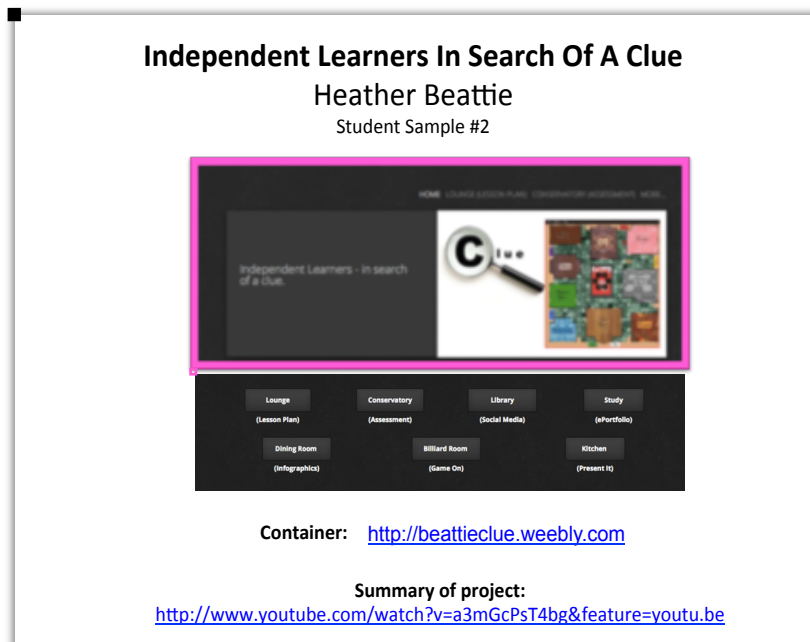


Figure 5. Switch to Independent Learners - Algebra

## 2.3 Tool Selections

As part of the Assignment, students selected a tool to serve as a container to house the rooms as well as free web2.0 tools for use in the instructional design to address the various challenges. The multitude of free assessment tools was an enlightening part of the project since the focus was to use formative assessments to help identify weak areas that could benefit from improvement. Sample tools they selected during the creation were as follows: scoopit, symbaloo, edmodo, quizlet, socrative, powtoon, emaze, pixton, edpuzzle, nearpod, pear deck, kahoot, quia, quill, zondle, quiz revolution, quiz bean, piktochart, creaza, twitter, wordpress, weebly, diigo, and pearltree.

### 3. RESULTS/LESSONS LEARNED

As part of the formative evaluation of the project creations, these observations and questions emerged:

- Many students ignored some of the directions such as word length, room components, creative titles, and thus lost points in the grading rubric. A question that may emerge is whether they curated the best or took short cuts to go for low hanging fruit—maybe a more in-depth rubric for tools selection could be used in the future.
- Too many previous examples may have been available, and possibly confusing them (picking a handful of strong examples might be a superior method).
- Check points – adding them with a ½ way freeze point in the semester may reduce procrastination.
- Teams – working together may have contributed to a fragmented vs fully integrated, consistent approach for some products that evidenced format issues across containers (dividing work assignments in piecemeal without seeing the entire picture may have been a detriment in the long run).
- Lack of clearly defined team roles and responsibilities, work plan... caused confusion, conflict/dysfunction.
- Future plans — require creation of a team project plan in writing with agreed on charter, roles, and milestones to track the progress.

### 4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper included the background and definition of learning curation; a description of the audience and environment where the graduate course was conducted; the course Assignment including the floor plan and rooms metaphor; web2.0 open sources, identification of digital tools that were selected for the container and instructional tools; screenshots of sample products; and results/lessons learned for future replication of the Assignment. Many of the suggested revisions will involve more structured planning and implementation to keep the students on track so they may avoid becoming so engaged with the Assignment that they do not pace themselves for final housing of their curated products into their selected tool container.

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